DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 015 SO 019 003

TITLE	Humanities and High Order Thinking Skills. Task Force Report.
INSTITUTION	Colorado State Dept. of Education, Denver. Office of Federal Relations and Instructional Services.
SPONS AGENCY	Colorado Endowment for the Humanities, Denver.; Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	[86]
NOTE	19p.; For related document, see SO 019 002. Appendix D may not reproduce clearly.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Critical Thinking; Decision Making; Elementary Secondary Education; *Humanities; *Humanities Instruction; Logical Thinking; Problem Solving; State Curriculum Guides; Teacher Certification
IDENTIFIERS	*Higher Order Skills; *Task Force Approach

ABSTRACT

Responding to the Colorado State Board of Education's request for recommendations concerning the need to improve humanities instruction and its relationship to the development of higher-order thinking skills, this task force report specifies a scope for humanities teaching; defines higher-order thinking skills as the ability to judge information, determine alternatives, and solve problems; and encourages the state board to expand humanities instruction in public schools. The humanities goals are outlined in terms of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and outcomes. Teaching strategy examples that involve individual courses, interdisciplinary units, or an entire school in a cross-graded approach are provided. Specific task force recommendations to the state board, local school districts, and individual communities are listed, along with suggestions for teacher certification or recertification in both higher-order thinking skills and humanities. Appendices include: (1) a questionnaire to determine the extent of classroom instruction in humanities and higher-order thinking skills; (2) a humanities consultant job description; and (3) the Colorado State Board of Education's resolution, "The Three R's of Freedom: Rights, Respect, and Responsibilities". (JHP)

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ED298015

HUMANITIES AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS

TASK FORCE REPORT

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HUMANITIES AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS

TASK FORCE REPORT

In June, 1985, the State Board of Education reviewed the Task Forces appointed to date and areas which still needed study. It was decided that two areas were of prime concern, humanities and the higher order thinking skills. In their deliberation the State Board also revised the report from the Colorado Humanities and School Project Steering Committee. A group formed as a result of a small grant from Council of Chief State School Officer and Colorado Endowment for the Humanities.

In summary, the State Board at their following meeting approved twenty members to the State Task Force. They considered various recommendations received and gave the Task Force nine charges to consider.

The inital Task Force meeting was held in August. Seven all day meetings were conducted, in addition to subcommittee work.

The State Board charges are listed below, followed with a brief response by the Task Force.

Response to the State Board Charges to the Task Force on
The Humanities and Higher Order Thinking Skills

1. Identify skills, knowledge, and competencies that should be developed through the humanities. Review how the humanities could increase the development of higher level thinking skills.

   The knowledge, attitudes and skills which should be developed through the humanities have been identified in the Humanities Goals found on page 6-8.

2. Examine successful humanities educational programs and determine what characteristics lead to their effectiveness. Provide guidelines for a "model" program.

   This is addressed in the goals recommended for the humanities consultant. The evaluation of humanities programs should be based upon the task force's Humanities Self-Assessment Instrument. See Appendix A, page 12-13.

3. Delineate alternative methods for integrating humanities into schools' curriculum programs. Make recommendations on how humanities concepts can reach <u>all</u> students.

   In the definition of humanities the task force describes four possible approaches: the whole school thematic approach, the interdisciplinary unit approach, the interdisciplinary course of study, or a traditional course that teaches the identified knowledge, attitudes, skills and outcome. See page 6-8.

4. Provide recommendations regarding the appropriate role in humanities for the state, CDE, local school districts, institutions of higher learning, and independent humanities organizations.

   The task force has made specific recommendations to the State Board of Education, local districts, the community, professional organizations, and institutions of higher education. See page 10-11.

5. Assess the availability of humanities resources at the local, regional, and state levels; suggest ways to better utilize these resources at the local level.

   This major task has been recommended as a goal of the humanities consultant who will be responsible for compiling a source book and developing a humanities information network. See Appendix B, page 14.

6. Address the appropriateness of expanding the humanities requirements for high school graduation, college entrance, and teacher education programs.

   Though the task force does not recommend adding a humanities requirement for high school graduation, humanities should be taught

in grades K-12. It need not be presented in a separate course, but should be integrated into the existing curriculum.

The task force recommends that six semester hours in humanities be required in the teacher pre-service education program. It further recommends the requirement of one recertification credit in the humanities for current teachers.

For initial certification the task force also recommends the study of higher order thinking skills in relation to the teacher's discipline. In recertification a minimum of one credit should be taken in higher order thinking skills. See "Certification and Re-certification Requirements". See page 11.

7. Consider recommendations based on those provisions in the various national reports related to the humanities.

   The task force reviewed many studies in its early deliberation. The literature on the teaching of the humanities should be further surveyed by the humanities consultant.

8. Identify higher order thinking skills all students should possess. How can these best be taught?

   The higher order thinking skills have been identified. (See page 6-7). The task force believes these skills are naturally, though not exclusively, learned through the study of the humanities. Higher order thinking skills should not be taught in isolation, i.e., disassociated from academic disciplines.

9. Devise a strategy for evaluation and assessment of higher order thinking skills, both for programs and students.

   Existing tests of higher order thinking skills should be researched by the new humanities consultant, and the conclusions should be disseminated. See "Job Description for Humanities Consultant", Appendix B, page 14.

IDENTIFICATION OF HUMANITIES AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS

Humanities Defined

Humanities is an integrated approach to the study of humankind including the nature, heritage and aesthetics of diverse cultures.

Humanities includes disciplines that are the result of human thought, experience and creation through the ages, e.g., literature, language, music, art, history and philosophy.

The use of critical thinking skills such as problem solving, decision making and evaluation in the teaching/learning process encourages students to think, apply and create throughout their lives.

The teaching of humanities is accomplished through individual courses, interdisciplinary units or whole school thematic approaches.

To be usable, a definition must encompass goals and student outcomes. These goals for knowledge, attitudes, skills, and outcomes can be found on the pages 6-8.

RATIONALE

(Rationale of the Task Force)

In the current cry for the reform of education, the popular rationale is that better education is necessary to keep up with the technological advances of the Japanese and others. Students and schools alike seem to be moving toward a narrow education -- "basics" or preparation for specific vocations. In contrast to this type of education, the broad field of the humanities encompasses human thought, experience, and creation through the ages.

This task force is convinced that the humanities must be central in K-12 education if students are to be prepared for a life that is fully human. The knowledge that we have identified as essential in the humanities is but the means to develop the attitudes and skills that make man more than a functional cog in a machine.

The attitudes listed in the definition above are key to the development of character and citizenship, especially the belief in the dignity of the individual and freedom of choice, respect for individual and cultural differences and a tolerance for others, all of which are best taught through the humanities. The higher order thinking skills which we have listed, especially judging information, determining alternatives, and solving problems are readily taught through the humanities, as well.

Because the task force believes that these humanities-linked attitudes and skills are the true keystone of our pluralistic democratic society, and the only foundation of a peaceful world, it urges the State Board of Education to take the courageous and far-sighted position that humanities teaching and learning must be expanded in the schools of Colorado. Indeed, the Board through its moral leadership as well as its direction of staff and budget must particularly foster the humanities if the humanities are to survive in the current educational climate.

HUMANITIES GOALS

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, SKILLS, OUTCOMES

KNOWLEDGE OF THE:

1. Human potential for good or evil
2. Diversity of cultures, past and present
3. Interrelationship of life experiences and various disciplines

ATTITUDES WHICH PROMOTE:

1. Self-worth
2. Belief in the individual and freedom of choice
3. Identification with one's own and other cultures
4. Ethusiasm for life
5. Appreciation for human accomplishment
6. Character development to include:
   a. Altruism
   b. Philantrophy
   c. Tolerance of differences in cultures and opinions

SKILLS WHICH PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO:

1. Gather information and Data:
   - Listen
   - Observe
   - Research
   - Collect

*2. Identify, Define and Clarify:
   - Central issues and problems
   - Conclusions
   - Reasons
   - Appropriate questions to ask, given a situation
   - Assumptions

* Ennis, R.H., "13 Dispositions of Critical Thinkers

*3. Judge Information:
- Determine credibility of sources
- Determine relevance
- Recognize consistency

*4. Determine Alternatives:
- Brainstorm
- Use imagery
- Use imagination
- Create

*5. Infer-solve problems; draw reasonable conclusions
- Use inductive reasoning
- Use deductive reasoning
- Predict probable consequences

6. Apply information to derive a:
- Conclusion
- Comparison
- Solution
- Summary
- Opinion/point of view

7. Present Findings:
- Oral communication
- Written communication
- Creative expression

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*Ennis, R.H., "13 Dispositions of Critical Thinkers

OUTCOMES:

1. The strength of character to resist man's inhumanities to man, personal, economic, and political injustices.
2. Commitment to improving the human condition and utilizing resources for the betterment of mankind.
3. Recognition of one's social responsibility to actively participate in society.
4. The continuation of creative endeavors.
5. The ability to:
   - *a. Be open minded
   - b. Take a position (and change a position) when the evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so
   - c. Take into account the total situation
   - d. Try to be well informed
   - e. Seek as much precision as the subject permits
   - f. Deal in an orderly manner with the parts of a complex whole
   - g. Look for alternatives
   - h. Seek reasons
   - i. Seek a clear statement of the issue
   - j. Keep in mind the original and/or basic concern
   - K. Use credible sources and mention them
   - l. Remain relevant to the main point
   - m. Be sensitive to the feelings, level of knowledge, and degree of sophistication of others.

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*Ennis, R.H., "13 Dispositions of Critical Thinkers"

TEACHING STRATEGIES

The teaching of humanities and developeing the knowledge, attitudes, skills and outcomes as defined, can be accomplished through: individual courses, interdisciplinary units, or whole school thematic approaches. The following include brief examples of each teaching strategy.

1. EXAMPLE: Whole School Thematic Approach
   One such program centers on the Dolores Archeological Dig. It integrates archeology, physical and life sciences, anthropology, history, outdoor survival, computer and writing skills. This program is cross-graded. It uses peer tutors and community mentors.

2. EXAMPLE: Interdisciplinary Unit Approach
   Elementary children study the Plains Indians. They learn about each tribe's way of life - their food, clothing, shelters, sign language, music and art. This unit culminates with an actual "Day on the Prairie". The children choose Indian names and join a tribe. They travel to a designated location and spend 2/3 of a day in authentic tribal activities including setting up tepees, dancing and enjoying Indian food.

3. EXAMPLE: Course of Study
   A course entitled "Science and Humanities" focuses on the life and times of individual scientists. It includes the history, philosophy and social impact of science. In addition, students explore the impact of science on art and literature.

4. EXAMPLE: Traditional Course
   A literature, music, art or similar course that teaches the higher order thinking skills, knowledge, attitudes and outcomes as identified on pages 4 through 8 would also be considered to be a humanities course.

The Humanities Task Force urges the following initiatives by the State Board of Education, local school districts, the community at large, professional organizations, and institutions of higher learning:

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

STATE BOARD

1. Hire a humanities consultant to implement task force recommendations.
2. Make the Three R's of Freedom Activity (Rights, Respect, Responsibility) approved by the State Board, an annual activity of local school districts. See Appendix C, page 15.
3. Distribute to all teachers a Self-Assessment Instrument and Humanities Source Book Survey form.
4. Urge institutions of higher learning to include courses on the Humanities and higher order thinking skills as part of the certification and re-certification programs.
5. Accept the State Task Force on the Humanities recommendations regarding higher order thinking skills and Humanities programs.
6. Urge that the State Task Force on the Humanities continue to meet periodically and also serve in a consulting capacity for the Humanities consultant.

LOCAL DISTRICTS

1. Distribute to all teachers the Self-Assessment Instrument and Humanities Book Survey.
2. Require staff-development inservices for teachers and administrators on Humanities and Higher Order Thinking Skills.
3. Designate a Humanities and Higher Order Thinking Skills contact person for the district to work with CDE consultant and network information within the district.
4. Assure that all students are exposed to the Humanities and develop Higher Order Thinking Skills. Existing courses can be revised and updated.
5. To meet this goal it is not necessary to add a separate course as a graduation requirement in these areas.

COMMUNITY

The task force recommends that the community, especially parents and business individuals and organizations, promote the teaching of Humanities and Higher Order Thinking Skills. This support might be in the form of finances, staff or material.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

CASCD - Colorado Assoc. of Supervision Curriculum Development
AASA - American Assoc. of School Administrators
CASE - Colorado Assoc. of School Administrators
CEA - Colorado Education Association
CCIRA - Colorado Council of International Reading Assoc.
CLAS - Colorado Language Arts Society

These organizations should provide inservices for their constituents on Humanities, the integration of disciplines and Higher Order Thinking Skills.

HIGHER ED

Revise teacher education programs to include Humanities and Higher Order Thinking Skills.

CERTIFICATION AND RECERTIFICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Higher Order Thinking Skills

A component of the certification/recertification process should be concerned with higher order thinking skills.

In the pre-service training of teachers, institutions of higher education should require a course that includes the teaching of higher order thinking skills as they relate to the major discipline of the student. Each discipline should develop a course unique to its field and based on the theory and research for teaching and learning of higher order thinking skills. Such a course would be a requirement for initial certification.

In the area of recertification we strongly recommend that a minimum of one (1) recertification credit be required in applying the current research and theory of higher order thinking skills to the subject area of the individual teachers.

II. Humanities

Another component of the certification/recertification process should be concerned with the humanities.

In the area of pre-service training of teachers, institutions of higher education should require a minimum of six semester hours in the humanities as defined in the Humanities Task Force Recommendations. See page 4

In the area of recertification, we strongly recommend a minimum of one (1) recertification credit be required in the humanities. Local districts are encouraged to offer staff development in the instruction of the humanities and integration of the humanities concept and processes in various subject areas.

PLEASE USE THIS INSTRUMENT TO DETERMINE WHETHER YOUR CLASS/COURSE/UNIT/PROGRAM INCLUDES SOME OR ALL OF THE HUMANITIES AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS CRITERIA

Appendix A

SCHOOL NAME_____ TEACHER_____ LEVEL_____

NAME OF COURSE, UNIT OR PROGRAM_____

HUMANITIES SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

	ALWAYS EVIDENT	USUALLY EVIDENT	SELDOM EVIDENT	NOT EVIDENT
KNOWLEDGE OF:				
1. The human potential for good or evil				
2. Diversity of culture and present				
3. Interrelationship of life experience and various disciplines				
4. Other - describe				
ATTITUDES WHICH PROMOTE:				
1. Self-worth				
2. Belief in the individual and freedom of choice				
3. Identification with one's own and other cultures				
4. Enthusiasm for life				
5. Appreciation for human accomplishment				
6. Character development as follows:				
a. Altruism				
b. Philantrophy				
c. Tolerance of differences in culture and opinions				
7. Other - describe				
SKILL WHICH PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO:				
I. Gather Information and Data:				
· Listen				
· Observe				
· Research				
· Collect				
2. Identify, Define, and Clarify:				
· Central issues and problems				
· Conclusions				
· Reasons				
· Appropriate questions to ask, given a situation				
· Assumptions				
3. Judge Information:				
· Determine credibility of sources				
· Determine relevance				
· Recognize consistency				
4. Determine Alternatives:				
· Brainstorm				
· Use imagery				
· Use imagination				
· Create				

	ALWAYS EVIDENT	USUALLY EVIDENT	SELDOM EVIDENT	NOT EVIDENT
5. Infer-Solve problems; draw reasonable conclusions				
· Use inductive reasoning				
· Use deductive reasoning				
· Predict probable consequences				
6. Apply Information				
· Conclusion				
· Comparison				
· Solution				
· Summary				
· Opinion/point of view				
7. Present Findings				
· Oral communication				
· Written communication				
· Creative expression				
OUTCOMES				
1. The strength of character to resist man's inhumanity to man - personal, economic, and political injustices				
2. Commitment to improving the human condition and utilizing resources for the betterment of mankind				
3. Recognition of one's social responsibility to actively participate in society				
4. The continuation of creative endeavors				
5. The ability to:				
a. Be open minded				
b. Take a position (and change a position) when the evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so				
c. Take into account the total situation				
d. Try to be well informed				
e. Seek as much precision as the subject permits				
f. Deal in orderly manner with the parts of a complex whole				
g. Look for alternatives				
h. Seek reasons				
i. Seek a clear statement of the issue				
j. Keep in mind the original and/or basic concern				
k. Use credible sources and mention them				
l. Remain relevant to the main point				
m. Be sensitive to the feelings, level of knowledge, and degree of sophistication of others				
6. Other - describe				

SUMMARY - Please briefly describe your class/course/unit program

APPENDIX B

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR HUMANITIES CONSULTANT

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Humanities and Liberal Arts background
2. Knowledge of curriculum
3. Ability to work with people and committees
4. Successful teaching experience
5. Ability to travel extensively
6. Staff development experience

DUTIES

1. Advocate the Humanities
2. Organize regional workshops and/or a Humanities fair
3. Promote Three R's of Freedom
4. Examine successful Humanities programs based on the criteria developed by the task force.
5. Compile source book of exemplary Humanities programs, courses, units, etc.
6. Coordinate with other area consultants to promote inter-disciplinary activities.
7. Research effective means of assessing Higher Order Thinking Skills
8. Be the liaison to national,state and local Humanities organizations.
9. Assist in facilitating exemplary programs (in districts)
10. Disseminate information on Humanities grants to each district's designated Humanities contact person.
11. Maintain CDE Humanities section of computer bulletin board including grants, educational opportunities, projects and resources.
12. Coordinate Humanities and Higher Order Thinking Skills with G & T Committee
13. Research national exemplary models in other states.

Appendix C

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION ON
"THE THREE R's OF FREEDOM: RIGHTS, RESPECT, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHEREAS, Humanities is an integrated approach to the study of humankind including the nature, heritage and aesthetics of diverse cultures, and;

WHEREAS, Humanities include disciplines that are the result of human thought, experiences and creation through the ages, e.g. literature, language., music, art, history and philosophy, and;

WHEREAS, the attitudes of self worth, dignity of the individual, freedom of choice, empathy, optimism, enthusiasm, and appreciation for mans' contribution, performances and creations throughout the ages are best taught through the humanities, and;

WHEREAS, the development of ones' character include the humanitarian attitude of altruism - concern for others and mankind, philanthropy- giving and sharing resources with others, respect for individual differences and diverse cultures, and tolerance for differing opinions and cultures, and;

WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the responsibility to improve the human condition through active participation in society, and;

WHEREAS, the attitudes critical to character and freedom are best taught within the humanities and social sciences curriculum, and;

WHEREAS, these attitudes should not be taught as isolated courses, and;

WHEREAS, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King were all leaders in furthering human rights, respect for all freedoms and citizenship responsibilities,

Therefore, be it resolved that the State Board of Education recommends that the month from the birthday of Martin Luther King, January 20, 1986 through the week of President's Day, February 21, 1986 be designated, "The Three R's of Freedom: Rights, Respect and Responsibilities." During this time, school districts are encouraged to review and evaluate the humanities and citizenship aspects of their current curriculum, plan for the development and implementation of the humanities where weaknesses exist, use this period to emphasize the contribution of diverse cultures to humankind and to bring in a variety of outside speakers who are active participants in government.

APPENDIX D

CURRENT INDEX TO JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

NUMBER: EJ 327 935

A STATEWIDE APPROACH TO MEASURING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Robert J. Sternberg

and

Joan B. Baron

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Volume 43
Number 2
Pages 40-43
October 1985

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